ODE

ON THE

TAKING OF *MINORCA.*

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O D E

ON THE

TAKING OF *MINORCA.*

ADDRESSED TO

The Honourable JAMES MURRAY.

Non ille pro caris amicis
Aut patriâ timidus perire.

HOR. L. iv. Od. 9. V. 52.

LONDON:

M.DCC.LXXXII.

O D E

ON THE

TAKING MINORCA.

ADDRESSED TO

The Honourable JAMES MURRAY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WORKS of this kind are generally uſhered into the world, with many apologies from the Author to the Public, "for preſuming to offer to their protection ſo trifling a performance, conſcious as he is of its demerits, and his own inability; but that he was ſuperinduced, by the partiality of his friends, to wave theſe objections, and throw the firſt feeble efforts of his untutored Muſe on their generoſity, in full confidence of the allowances they would make for his youth and inexperience."—The writer of the following lines has no ſuch apology to offer. Far removed from all his friends

(except indeed one or two, who highly deſerve that title) *he has not been flattered by the voice of partiality into a falſe opinion of his abilities; and upon the merits of his compoſition, he leaves it to the Public to determine: at the ſame time aſſuring them, that he means it not as a diſplay of his poetical talents; but as an humble and* individual *tribute of that admiration, which a grateful* Country *pays, to the virtues, the courage, and the ſufferings, of the brave* GOVERNOR *of* MINORCA, *and the* GLORIOUS LITTLE BAND *that ſhared his dangers and his honours.*

May 1ſt, 1782.

ODE

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ON THE

TAKING OF *MINORCA.*

O! Cou'd I ſoar above the vulgar herd,
Upborne upon the *Theban* * *Eagle's* wing!
Or was it mine, like the *Mæonian* † *Bird*,
In ſtrong, ſublime, majeſtic notes to ſing!

* PINDAR. † HOMER.

Or cou'd I warble like the *Mantuan* * *Swan*,
Adorning worthy deeds with worthy rhymes,
And undiminiſh'd hand to future times
Actions that to the *Hero* raiſe the *Man!*

Or cou'd I boaſt in ſtrains like thoſe to ſing,
Which made old *Tyber*'s margin ring
With † DRUSUS' praiſes, and the fame he bore
From fartheſt *Europe*'s weſtern ſhore;
Where *Gallia*'s myriads fell beneath his ſword,
And *Alps*' bleak regions trembled at his word!
Were mine the numbers that declare
AUGUSTUS † great alike in peace and war;

Then

* VIRGIL.

† HORACE.—See the 4th, 14th, and 15th Odes of the 4th book; which are the moſt ſublime of his compoſitions. The former was written in praiſe of DRUSUS, and the two latter recite

the

Then might I hope, in never-dying lays
To give to diſtant times a MURRAY's praiſe.

But, ah! unus'd to ſing on themes ſo high,
Much does my humble Muſe her powers miſtruſt,
And long, long wont to grovel in the duſt,
Fears to expand her wings, and range the ſky:
She fears, ſhe dreads the arduous taſk
Of ſinging MURRAY's praiſe, unſkill'd
As yet "the lofty * rhyme to build;"
For worthier bards do heroes aſk:
Yet hope, my Muſe, for diſtant days,
The theme will dignify thy lays;

the glories of AUGUSTUS. In the 14th are related the *martial* exploits of his reign; and the 15th celebrates his talents for the arts of peace.

* MILTON.

And

And thou may'ſt ſteal the fame thou can'ſt not give;
For, grac'd with MURRAY's name, thy ſtrains ſhall
ever live.

Yes, VALIANT CHIEF! th' hiſtoric Muſe ſhall paint
On her fair page, in characters more ſtrong,
Thy martial deeds, than can theſe colours faint,
This pencil weak, or can the Poet's ſong.
She ſaw that patriot zeal thy breaſt inſpir'd,
Inſtill'd freſh courage, with new fury fir'd;
She ſaw thy matchleſs valour, and approv'd,
Admir'd thy virtues, and thy ſpirit lov'd;
And ſtill to Valour and to Virtue true,
Her choiceſt garlands ſhall ſhe wreathe for you.

THEE ſhall ſhe ſhew unto the eye
Of emulous poſterity,

The

The prop of BRITAIN's ſinking name,
The bulwark of her falling fame,
Who mad'ſt thy Country's good thy nobleſt, only aim.

Thy ſword, unſheath'd in Freedom's cauſe,
Like virtuous PAOLI's ſhe draws:
Thy patriot love ſhe paints as HAMPDEN's ſtrong,
Or SIDNEY's, and the noble few,
Still to the call of Freedom true;
And numbers THEE amongſt her fav'rite throng.

Brave ſhe pourtrays THEE in the field,
As * EDWARD, knowing not to yield;
Wiſe as the crafty † FRED'RIC, ſtill
By foreſight quick averting ill.

* The Black Prince. † The King of PRUSSIA.

And 'mongſt the names ſhe does to fame conſign,
She foremoſt places, VALIANT MURRAY, thine.

While martial glory ſhall the ſoul inſpire,
Thy deeds heroic ſhall mankind admire;
And, ne'er to ſenſe of merit loſt,
THEE, her chief pride, ſhall BRITAIN boaſt:
Let others build a guilty fame
On ſlaughter'd thouſands, cities raz'd;
By hireling bards let them be prais'd:
Thine is a nobler, juſter claim;
The claim of him who bravely fights,
Sacred to ſave a Nation's rights.
Defeat gives THEE what vict'ry can't beſtow,
And of his laurels robs the conq'ror's brow.

THEE

THEE ſhall MINORCA as her God adore,
And public gratitude ſhall raiſe
Her bleſt memorials to thy praiſe;
For THEE a nation's pray'rs ſhall riſe
In grateful odours to the ſkies;
And liſt'ning Heav'n will ever hear
The vows it knows to be ſincere,
And on thy head its choiceſt bleſſings pour.

Great were thy labours, and thy ſuff'rings great,
And great ſhall be thy fame;
Nor ſhall th' united wrath of Time and Fate
Deſtroy the honours of thy name.
The * Muſe that ſung THEE erſt in conq'ring arms,
Extending o'er new worlds BRITANNIA's ſway,

* Alluding to ſome private pieces by the ſame author.

And ſpreading thro' thoſe * climes war's dire alarms,
Which Sol laſt bleſſes with his parting ray;
Now ſings THEE in misfortune greater far,
Sharing the famiſh'd ſoldier's toil,
Cheering his labours with thy ſmile,
And watching o'er his rights with guardian † care.

Aſtoniſh'd *Afric* heard thy cannon's roar
In thund'ring terror roll along her frighted ſhore.
She knew how great thy martial fire;
She knew thy valiant numbers ſmall;
She knew diſeaſe, with havoc dire,
Triumphant reign'd within thy wall.

* North America, where GENERAL MURRAY had a very important command laſt war.

† See the generous attention paid to his noble garriſon by their brave Commander, in the firſt articles of capitulation, propoſed by him to the DUC DE CRILLON.

Her

Her tawny monarchs, ſeldom known
To feel misfortunes but their own,
Heard with compaſſion of thy woe,
And, warm'd by Pity's gen'rous glow,
Into thy ſickly fort their * ſuccours ſtriv'd to pour.

Feelings leſs gen'rous fir'd the † *Gallic* breaſt;
And to his uſe thy woes did but ſuggeſt
A wiſh thy mis'ries to improve;
He knew—he *felt* the force of gold;
Knew for thy valiant band thy love;
And hop'd thy honour might be ſold.

* Relief was frequently ſent, or attempted to be ſent, into MINORCA, from different parts of the coaſt of Africa.

† Alluding to the Bribe offered by the DUC DE CRILLON to GENERAL MURRAY.

But THOU, like *Rome*'s * FABRICIUS, born
In Virtue's paths to tread, as does the Sun
His daily courſe untir'd, unerring run,
Return'dſt the proffer'd bribe with ſcorn.

The ſons of † *Corſica*, for Freedom prov'd
Their zeal, by aiding the bleſt cauſe they lov'd.
And ſtill with ancient love of Freedom fir'd,
Still with the holy flame inſpir'd,

* When PYRRHUS, king of Epirus, made war with the Romans, he attempted to bribe their General, FABRICIUS, with an offer of the fourth of his empire; and afterwards, when the king's phyſician offered to remove his royal maſter by poiſon, the virtuous Roman ſent him back in chains to the tent of PYRRHUS: upon which he is related by the Latin hiſtorians to have exclaimed, "that it was a more difficult taſk to corrupt the integrity of FABRICIUS, than to turn the Sun from his courſe."

† The garriſon conſiſted of 20 Corſicans.

Greece * ſent her ſons from Slav'ry's land
To ſhare the honours of thy band.
As the warm Sun's communicative ray
Gives to the paly Moon a borrow'd light,
So did the luſtre of thy glories bright
Kindle their ſmother'd ardour into day.

And ſay, ye ſacred Shades! who died
In *Athen*'s glory, *Sparta*'s pride,
Ye Shades, who fought, ſucceſsful fought,
Or ſeal'd by death the fame ye bought,
Did thro' your breaſts heroic virtue roll
In warmer currents than in MURRAY's ſoul?

Thou, who at fam'd *Thermopylæ* didſt fight
Gainſt the proud † *Perſian*'s vaſt, unnumber'd might,

* 25 Greeks.—See GENERAL MURRAY's official letter to LORD HILLSBOROUGH. † XERXES.

Who

Who, with thy ſmall, thy valiant, faithful band,
Fell'ſt for the freedom of thy native land,
LEONIDAS! * Behold how ſmall,
The troops within yon ſhatter'd wall:
Behold! their ſteady looks declare
Death than diſhonour ſweeter far:
Behold! and, for your actions are the ſame,
In MURRAY ſee the rival of thy fame.

Ye Chiefs! who fell on *Carthage'* wall,
Ordain'd by *Rome*'s proud ſons to fall,
Unmindful of the debt they ow'd
To her their faithleſs † Father woo'd;

Where

* LEONIDAS for a long time defended the ſtreights of Thermopylæ with 300 men againſt the millions of Perſia: and at length, being betrayed by ſome deſerters, fell at the head of his little army, who all died with their arms in their hands.

† By a fabulous tradition, ROMULUS is ſaid to have deſcended

Where ev'ry patriot * woman tore
From her fair arms the ornaments ſhe wore;
And all, by virtuous poverty made great,
Their riches gave to ſerve the ſtate,

from ÆNEAS, who, in his way from Troy to Italy, was driven on the coaſts of Africa, whence, after being graciouſly received by DIDO, queen of Carthage (in whom the ſtory of his misfortunes had excited a paſſion for his perſon) and furniſhed by her with every thing neceſſary, he proceeded on his voyage. The diſconſolate queen ſtabbed herſelf through grief for the loſs of her lover, who lays the blame of his departure upon the Stars and the Fates; and alleges, in defence of his infidelity, that his father's ghoſt came to frighten him away. But poor is the faith of him, who has no other excuſe for his inconſtancy than what Deſtinies and Hobgoblins afford him! VIRGIL indeed in ſome meaſure apologizes for his Hero, by giving much leſs ardour to his love, than forwardneſs to the paſſion of the royal fair one. He thought, perhaps, with a later poet, that

" The fruit that will fall without ſhaking
" Indeed is too mellow for me." LORD CHESTERFIELD.

* During the ſiege of Carthage, the women melted down their bracelets into money to pay the ſoldiers.

The

The ſtate, who long the miſtreſs of the world,
From her vaſt height by jealous *Rome* was hurl'd.

And thou, *Jeruſalem*, decreed
By Heav'n's almighty wrath to bleed;
Whoſe tow'rs by TITUS' conq'ring arms o'erthrown
Were doom'd to fall by Heav'n's inſulted Son;
Where the devoted mother fed
On the curs'd * offſpring that ſhe bred;
Admit, by kindred ſuff'ring's, MURRAY's claim,
To ſhare with your brave bands a kindred fame.

Bluſh, BLAKENEY! and your † thouſands, bluſh!
Your hireling tongues in ſilence huſh,

Ye

* This, and many other concomitant horrors of this ſiege, are related by the Jewiſh hiſtorian, JOSEPHUS.

† When BLAKENEY ſurrendered MINORCA to the French,

in

Ye who have ſung in venal lays
A COWARD's or a TRAITOR's praiſe!
See *twice three* * *hundred*, † weak and faint,
Suſtain thoſe toils his num'rous bands diſmay'd;
Ills far beyond what verſe can paint
Threaten'd in vain who ſcorn'd to be afraid:—
Fill'd with their Country's love, they ‡ ſilent wait,
Firm, ſteady, and reſolv'd, their deſtin'd fate.

in the Year 1756, of his original number, *three thouſand men*, he had only loſt *one hundred*; and yet delivered up the fort, becauſe the *hands were not ſufficient to man its extenſive Works*. Hiſt. of laſt War.

* The night before the capitulation, the whole number able to carry arms amounted to *ſix hundred and ſixty* only. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

† Of theſe, *five hundred and ſixty* were *tainted with the ſcurvy*. D°.

‡ Such was the uncommon ſpirit of the king's ſoldiers, that they *concealed their diſorders and inability*, rather than go into the hoſpitals. D°.

But vainly mortals dare oppoſe
What ruling Heav'n's high will ordains:
The angry Hoſt of Heav'n his foes,
In vain weak man the fight maintains.
A furious * monſter Heav'n ſent,
Who ſpread deſtruction where he went:
† Hundreds, the victims of his ſway,
Reſign'd their breath each fatal day:
Smote by his rage, the ſoldier fell,
And ſcorn'd the ſecret wound to tell;
But, ſpread in ſilent anguiſh on the ground,
Where duty call'd him, was he lifeleſs ‡ found.

The

* The moſt inveterate ſcurvy, which, I believe, ever infected mortals, reduced us to this ſituation. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

† See the phyſicians' reports.

‡ Several men *died on guard*, after having ſtood centry. Their

fate

The fury rag'd without * relief,
And all was death, deſpair, and grief;
The air was frighted with the moans
Of fathers, and the plaints of ſons.
At length, their ſcanty numbers thin'd by death,
Robb'd by pale ſickneſs and diſeaſe of breath,
The MARTIAL BAND bluſh'd not their woes to own,
And proudly deign'd, "reſign † their arms to God alone."

Nor vain the boaſt: for not to force
Of arms, but unto Heav'n's curſe

fate was not diſcovered till called upon for the relief, when it came to their turn to mount again. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

* See the phyſicians' reports.

† Our battalions laid down their arms, declaring *they had ſurrendered them to God alone.* GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

Upon a guilty land;
Not to the ſword or pointed lance
Of perjur'd * *Spain*, or faithleſs *France*,
Submitted the BRAVE BAND:
Nor cou'd the conq'ring troops much glory gain
O'er † legions thin'd by death, and arms unnerv'd by pain.

* Whoever wonders that the epithet of *perjured* ſhould be applied to the ſullen honour of Spain, muſt remember, that ſhe made the moſt ample profeſſions of friendſhip and good-will towards England, at the very time that ſhe was ſecretly favouring the deſigns of her enemies; and that theſe profeſſions were made ſo near the delivery of her memorial, that they almoſt accompanied each other.

† Our battalions laid down their arms,——having the conſolation to know, *the victors could not plume themſelves on taking an hoſpital.* GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

Humanity!

Humanity! for thou, ſoft maid,
Waſt there, and lent thine * healing aid
To thoſe poor victims of diſeaſe,
Who, with faint march, and tott'ring knees,
Through the rang'd † armies of their victors tread,
Did not thy pearly ‡ tribute fall
From the proud *Spaniard*, and the *Gaul*,
To the diſtreſſes and the woes,
The labours and fatigues of thoſe,
Who whilom fill'd their daſtard ſouls with dread?

* The Spaniſh, as well as French, Surgeons attended our hoſpitals. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

† The two armies were drawn up in two lines; the battalions fronting each other, forming a hay for us to march through. D°.

‡ Such were the diſtreſſing figures of our men, that many of the Spaniſh and French Troops are ſaid *to have ſhed tears as they paſſed them.* D°.

Great

Great is the praiſe your Chief beſtows;
Grateful the tears that fall from foes;
And theſe unpractis'd lays ſincere:
But theſe are yet your ſmalleſt meeds;
For know, BRAVE BAND! your valiant deeds
Rehears'd, poſterity ſhall hear,
With EDWARD's, HENRY's, and each honour'd name,
That gain'd at *Agincourt* or *Creſſy* deathleſs fame.

Nor * ended with the toilſome war
The gen'rous CHIEFTAIN's anxious care:
But, bleſt with feeling, as with valour great,
Link'd by the bond that ties the brave,

* I ſhall wait here *till I ſee the laſt man of* my noble garriſon *ſafely and commodiouſly* embarked. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

Cou'd

Cou'd thence His troops a joy derive,
Mindleſs His war-worn * health to ſave,
To winds and ſtorms His life he'd give,
And ſhare by † ſea His valiant ſoldiers' fate.

But claims ſtill dearer fill'd THY breaſt,
And call'd THEE, MURRAY, to ‡ *Italia*'s clime;
Where THY fond infants panted for the time,
When to THY heart they ſhou'd be preſt;

Where

* His *own health will not admit of* a long ſea-voyage. See 4th article of capitulation.

† If my accompanying them in a tranſport to England, would be of the ſmalleſt ſervice to any of them, *I would cheerfully go with them by ſea.* GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

‡ I truſt His Majeſty will approve of my going to Leghorn, to bring

Where THY lov'd Conſort, deck'd in beauty's charms,
Waited to crown THY patient toils,
To bleſs THEE with her tender ſmiles,
And claſp her HERO in her longing arms.

Long with thoſe ſmiles may'ſt THOU be bleſt!
And by THY Country's love careſs'd,
Long may'ſt THOU live t' enjoy the fame
THY martial deeds, THY virtues claim!
That fame which ſhines with added luſtre bright,
And gains freſh ſtrength from Envy's venom'd bite.

For know, BRAVE CHIEF! nor courage, tried
In fields with crimſon carnage dy'd,

bring home with me my wife and children, who fled to Italy the evening of the day the Spaniſh army landed on the iſland. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

That dar'd War's fierceſt fury brave,
Feeling, that ſooth'd THY ſoldier's woe,
Nor generoſity, that gave
Its warmeſt praiſes to THY * foe,
Nor all the virtues of THY god-like ſoul,
Can ſtop pale † Envy's rage, unknowing of control.

But, lo! I ſee the vanquiſh'd fiend
Sculk like a coward from the fight;
Thy fame BRITANNIA ſhall defend,
And ſhield THEE with her guardian might:

* See the generous eulogy which the brave VETERAN makes on the virtues of COUNT CRILLON. GENERAL MURRAY's letter.

† It is ſaid, Sir W. D——R intends exhibiting a charge againſt GENERAL MURRAY. This is generally attributed to *the loſs of his Reaſon*: I hope this apology is the true one; as it otherwiſe can only be accounted for by *the loſs of his Virtue*.

As gold flows purer, richer, from the fire,
THOU ſhalt freſh honours from her rage receive;
And, budding freſh, thy laurels ſhall aſpire
With tow'ring head, and ever-green ſhall live:
Their bows ſhall ſpread with vigour ever new,
And grow, with added years, ſtill fairer to the view.

FINIS.